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E.O. 12958: DECL: 03/13/2018
TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [GG](#) [RS](#)
SUBJECT: GOR DENIES INVOLVEMENT IN ABKHAZIA MILITARY
BUILD-UP

REF: A. MOSCOW 566
[1](#)B. TBILISI 396

Classified By: Political M/C Alice G. Wells. Reasons 1.4 (B/D).

[1](#)1. (C) All MFA Georgia handlers expressed surprise at the GOG's allegation that the GOR was providing military assistance to Abkhazia (ref B). MFA CIS Fourth Department Deputy Director Aleksey Pavlovskiy told us March 12 that he was hearing such news for the first time from us. Pavlovskiy went on to say that, as clearly stated in the March 6 MFA statement, the GOR's move to pull out of the CIS sanctions regime was intended to increase economic, financial assistance as well as expanded official contacts with Abkhazia (ref A). He emphasized that the GOR had no immediate military plans for Abkhazia. Pavlovskiy warned against giving too much credence to GOG reports, saying that even the UN had noted the copious "false reports" issued by the GOG. In an earlier, March 8 conversation, Pavlovskiy acknowledged that Russia would be free to sell weapons, although "it does not mean Russia will do so tomorrow."

[1](#)2. (C) GOR Special Envoy for the Abkhazia conflict Vladislav Chernov echoed Pavlovskiy, and advised consulting with the UNOMIK, rather than relying on "exaggerated" GOG reports. According to Chernov, the Abkhaz, perceiving a heightened threat level, might be responding to the Georgians force concentration along the "border" by reinforcing their peacekeeping operation. The Abkhaz rightfully saw the GOG's insistence on sanctions against Abkhazia as another sign that the GOG would be happy to have Abkhazia remain an economic backwater indefinitely.

[1](#)3. (C) A clearly frustrated MFA CIS Fourth Department Deputy Director Dmitriy Tarabrin also denied Russian involvement in any military activity in Abkhazia. Both Pavlovskiy and Tarabrin rejected Saakashvili's charges of Russian violation of Georgia's territorial integrity. Both insisted that the GOR's pullout from the sanctions regime could not have been a surprise, as it was planned over a year ago. MFA officials reiterated that the GOR had no intentions of undermining Georgian territorial integrity.

[1](#)4. (U) On March 13, the Duma will hold a special hearing on the request for recognition from Abkhazia, South Ossetia, and Transnistria.
BURNS